KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

This magnificent structure has always been considered as a perfect specimen of Gothic architecture. When viewed from the outside, the massive stone with which it is composed, and the immense buttresses that support it, raise an idea of the most uncommon solidity; but this dwells only for a short time on the mind; the height and magnitude of the building, its open-worked battlements, and finely-proportioned pinnacles and towers, exalt the fleeting emotions that arise from the consideration of its strength, into the sensations that emanate from the contemplation of its sublimity and grandeur. The interior view is yet more impressive. The vast arched roof, unsustained by a single pillar, with its voluminous stones, displaying all the elegance of fan-work, and seeming to hang in air, as if "art had taught them to forget nature, and weaned them of their tendency to gravitate," at once astonishes and confounds.

The extreme length of this superb edifice is 316 feet, the breadth 84 feet, the height from the ground to the summit of the battlements 90 feet, to the top of the pinnacle somewhat more than 101, and to the summit of the corner towers 146 feet 6 inches. The space enclosed by the walls is 291 feet in length, 78 feet in height, and 45 feet 6 inches in breadth.

When this fabric was commenced by King Henry the Sixth, he made the Provost and Fellows a perpetual grant of a stone quarry at Heselwode, in Yorkshire, and likewise vested a part of his Duchy of Lancaster in feoffees, for carrying on and completing the building. How far it was raised during the life of this prince is not accurately known, but it is probable that it was carried no higher than where the white stone reaches, which is pretty high at the east end; thence it recedes gradually to the west. In the year 1460 an entire stop was put to the work, for Edward the Fourth confiscated the Duchy of Lancaster, as well as all the other revenues of the College, regranting, however, a sufficient sum for the maintenance of the Provost and scholars, but nothing towards the completion of the building.

After an interruption of sixteen years, the work was resumed through the interest of Dr. Field, Warden of Winchester College, and the Provost of King's. In the four years following, 1,29*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.* was expended on the chapel, of which 1,000*l.* was given by the king, and 140*l.* by Thomas de Rotherham, Bishop of Lincoln. From June, 1483, till the end of March in the ensuing year, the business was again at a stand; but Richard the Third at that time appointed Thomas Cliff overseer of the works, who continued so till December; but nothing material appears to have been done, the expenses in the nine months only amounting to 74*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.*, of which sum Richard is supposed to have given 70*l.*

From this period the work was suspended till May, 1508, when it was re-commenced by Henry VII. The king died in the following year, but left directions to complete the chapel, and invested his executors with sufficient authority to defray all necessary expenses. The building from this time advanced with rapidity, and the case of the chapel was finished in July, 1515. The money for defraying the charges appears to have been delivered to the Provost and scholars by the executors in sums of 5,000*l.* at a time.

The high honour of being the architect of this structure is generally conferred on Mr. Cloos, of whom scarcely any thing appears to be known but his name, or his son Nicholas Cloos, one of the first fellows of this college, and afterwards Bishop of Lichfield. It is probable that both these persons were concerned in it, but more particularly the latter; as a manuscript quoted by Mr. Walpole mentions Bishop Cloos as "a person in whose capacity King Henry the Sixth had such confidence, that he made him overseer and manager of all his intended buildings and designs for this college." Allowing full credit to this authority, it will not, in our opinion, warrant the architectural merit of the edifice being exclusively attached to the Cloos.

With the government of Henry, his patronage probably terminated; we have, therefore, no reason to imagine that the bishop was continued in his office of overseer by Henry's successors; and if he was not, he cannot be entitled to more praise than that of laying the foundation, and raising a portion of the walls.

About the middle of the chapel is a wooden screen and organ-loft very curiously carved. This was erected in the year 1534, when Anna Boleyn was queen to Henry the Eighth. The west side is ornamented with several lover's knots; and a panel near the wall displays the

To learn about PDF Compression and OCR visit ThePaperlessOffice.org